KV FOCUS

COLLEGE NIGHT
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KalamazooVALLEY community college

ENGINEERING, DESIGN, MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

Student Jermaine Hammond running a prototype part on a Milltronics CNC Lathe

Manufacturing has changed dramatically over the past few decades. On-the-job-training now starts with a certificate or degree in a given trade, and continues with ongoing education to advance employee skills or keep them current.

"Skilled trades are critically important," said Bill Kring, Machine Tool Instructor at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. "The machines are so high tech now, there are not enough trained grads for high-paying, available jobs."

Kalamazoo Valley is at the forefront of filling those jobs with quality instruction and state-of-the-art machines and tools for hands-on learning.

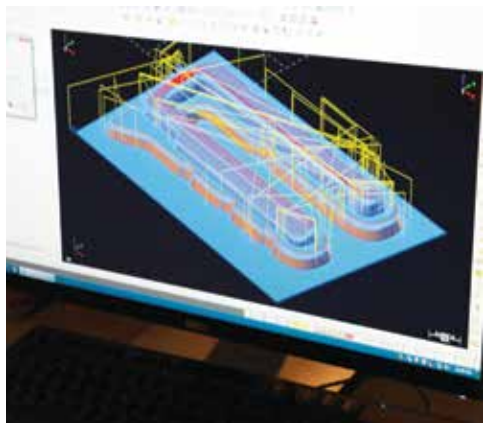
One such high-tech tool, a computer numerical controlled machine (CNC), is becoming the norm in manufacturing, requiring a high level of training. It starts with the machinists, who may have one or more specific skills. Further development of machinist skills turns out tool and die makers, trim die makers, pattern makers, or mold makers, to name a few.

Engineers and CAD/CAM operators are additional jobs that need to be filled state and nation wide. The Engineering program at Kalamazoo Valley prepares students for transfer to several four year universities.

Thanks to a national grant, future CAD/CAM operators will be learning at Kalamazoo Valley on the Mastercam, the number one product in the computer-aided design industry. "We feel fortunate that Axys, Inc., chose us as one of three colleges in Michigan for their roll-out event in June," said Kring. The machine makes it possible to train and prepare current and future employees for the higher-skilled, higher-paying, sustainable jobs. This is a critical step to help manufacturing stay competitive, especially in Kalamazoo.

"Over the past three years, more than 200 Kalamazoo Valley grads have gone to work for Parker Hannifin, Stryker, Liberty Molds, MolSon, and many other local high-tech manufacturing companies," said Kring. "We reach out to businesses, they tell us what they need in a trained employee."

Students recognize the high quality training and outreach provided by the Kalamazoo Valley staff. One student shares, "Bill is without a doubt one of the finest instructors at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. He's got



Mastercam CAD/CAM software

knowledge and experience in the manufacturing industry. Looking for a job? He's so well connected with the community, local manufacturing and engineering companies know his name and number by heart, he will help you find a job. I rate two thumbs up!"

For more information on training for a high-paying job in the trades, go to www.kvcc.edu/programs/engineering/ or contact Kring at wkring@kvcc.edu.

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN FINISHES A HEALTHY FIRST SEASON

The most recent Kalamazoo Valley Healthy Neighborhood initiative, Kids in the Kitchen, finished this series strong with a celebration in August.

Young student in the Kalamazoo Valley Healthy Neighborhood initiative, Kids in the Kitchen

Partnering with Kalamazoo County Parks and Recreation and Van Buren Intermediate School District, 50 classes were taught at the Bronson Healthy Living Campus Community Kitchen in eight weeks to more than 150 participants, teaching children food safety, basic cooking techniques, and healthy meal choices.

Building on the Healthy Choices Matter theme, this series was another fun way to increase students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior towards a healthy lifestyle.

"Some of the topics in our sessions included choosing whole grains, powerful proteins, and eating from the fantastic food groups," said Melody Woods, community outreach coordinator for Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Healthy Neighborhoods initiative.

Known as "Miss Mel" to the kids, Woods has been involved with the Bronson Healthy Living Campus since she graduated from Kalamazoo Valley in 2013. Being community outreach coordinator once the Bronson Healthy Living Campus opened in 2015 seemed like a perfect fit.

Woods is passionate about the fight against poor food choices for children. She lost both her mom and a brother to obesity-related health issues. "It started at an emotional level," said Woods. "If you make healthy choices as a way of life early, it is easier than doing it as an adult."

So when kids, aged 5-12, take a cooking class without their parents, does the knowledge follow them home?

"We sent each participant home with a recipe for what we made that day in class, and were thrilled to find out that they were trying them at home!" said Woods. She also makes sure that healthy ingredients can be found within walking distance for parents and children alike. "We made pizza pockets from whole wheat tortillas, tomato sauce, and other easily-found ingredients," she said.

Woods was happy to learn that the kids thought most of the recipes tasted good. "In a survey, one of the kids wrote 'I learned you could make healthy food that didn't taste nasty'."

"We try to instill that if you taste something one way and don't like it, try it another way," said Woods. "If you don't like canned peas, try frozen. If you don't like cherry tomatoes off the vine, try cooking them briefly in a sauté pan with other fresh ingredients," said Woods. The list goes on.

Kalamazoo Valley's Healthy Neighborhood initiatives team is just getting started. They have attended numerous festivals, back-to-school events, and many other community collaborations to spread the word about good nutrition. They will continue doing so, partnering soon with the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

To find out more about the Kalamazoo Valley Healthy Neighborhood initiative, visit www.kvcc.edu/healthyliving.

If you have ideas to share or would like to volunteer, contact Melody Woods at mwoods@kvcc.edu.

VISITING WRITERS SHARE THEIR TALENT
WITH STUDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

Kalamazoo Valley is rich with prolific and talented writers. Several alumni have gone on to publish books that have gained national recognition.

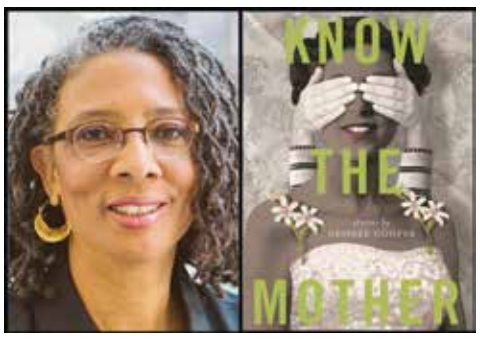
Many of the college's English instructors are also widely recognized for their published works. "We have a particularly strong English department at this college and I'm proud to be a part of it," said English instructor Rob Haight.

Haight is marking his 28th year as a Kalamazoo Valley English instructor. "*Feeding Wild Birds*," Haight's third and most recent book, is a collection of nature poems organized by season. Haight describes "*Feeding Wild Birds*" as a spiritual book. Childhood memories are interspersed with descriptive nature scenes. The book is available through Mayapple Press, www.mayapplepress.com.

Haight coordinates Kalamazoo Valley's "About Writing" Visiting Writers series. The events offer students and community members the opportunity to talk with professional writers and listen to their work. Haight has been bringing noteworthy authors to the college since 2001.

The visits are free and open to the public and always include a craft talk and a reading. During each of the visits, the visiting authors present craft talks from 10-10:45 a.m. and read from their work from 2:15-3 p.m. The events, held in the Student Commons Theater at the Texas Township Campus.

Desiree Cooper will be the visiting writer on Oct. 6. Kresge Artist Fellow, Cooper is a former attorney, Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist and Detroit community activist whose fiction dives unflinchingly into the intersection of racism and sexism. Using the compressed medium of flash fiction, she explores intimate spaces to reveal what it means to be human.



Desiree Cooper, "Know the Mother"

Her fiction and poetry have appeared in *Callaloo*, *Detroit Noir*, *Best African American Fiction 2010*, and *Tidal Basin Review*, among other online and print publications. Her first collection of flash fiction, "*Know the Mother*," was published by Wayne State University Press in March 2016. Cooper was a founding board member of Cave Canem, a national residency for emerging black poets. She is currently a Kimbilio Fellow, a national residency for African American fiction writers.

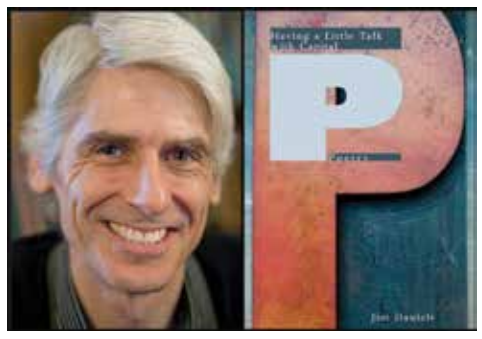
Writer Maggie Messitt visits the college on Nov. 10. An independent narrative and immersion journalist, Messitt has spent the last decade reporting from inside under-served communities in southern Africa and middle America. Typically focused on complex issues through the lens of every day life, her work is deeply invested in rural regions, social justice and environmental sustainability.

A dual-citizen, Messitt lived in northeastern South Africa from 2008 to 2011. During that time she was a long-form reporter, newspaper editor, and the founding director of a writing school for rural African women. Her projects and programs were funded by the International Academy of Film and Television, the Lovely Planet Foundation, and the South African Media Development and Diversity Agency.

Since her return to the U.S., Messitt's essays have been published in Creative Nonfiction, *Mother Jones*, *The Rumpus*, and the *Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance* magazine, among others. An excerpt of her first book was recognized by Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies, honored for the "best documentary writing for a long-term project," and her work for Wisconsin Public Television and POV documentary films earned her a 2010 Multimedia Storytelling Fellowship at UC--Berkeley's Knight Digital Media Center. Most recently, Messitt was a 2015 Kenyon Review Peter Taylor Fellow, a John Cady Research Fellow, and a Scholar-in-Residence at Bowers Writers House. Editor of *Proximity*, a quarterly collection of true stories, Messitt has a BA in journalism and human rights from Boston College and an MFA from Goucher College.

Maggie Messitt, "The Rainy Season"

On March 29 and 30, poet Jim Daniels visits the college. Daniels is a Detroit native who is a creative writing professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Poetry, fiction, and screenwriting are his primary research and teaching interests. Recent books include "*Birth Marks*" (2013) and "*Having a Little Talk with Capital P Poetry*" (2011), poetry; "*Eight Mile High*" (2014), and "*Trigger Man*," short fiction (2011). He has written four produced screenplays, including, most recently, "*The End of Blessings*". "*Street*," a book of poems accompanying the photographs of Charlee Brodsky, won the Tillie Olsen Prize from the Working-Class Studies Association. In addition, he has edited or co-edited four anthologies, including "*Letters to America: Contemporary American Poetry on Race*," and "*American Poetry: The Next Generation*". His poems have been featured on Garrison Keillor's "*Writer's Almanac*," in Billy Collins' *Poetry 180* anthologies, and Ted Kooser's "*American Life in Poetry*" series.



Jim Daniels, "Having a Little Talk with Capital P Poetry"

He received the Brittingham Prize for Poetry, two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, and two from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. His poems have appeared in the Pushcart Prize and Best American Poetry anthologies. At Carnegie Mellon, he received the Ryan Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Mark Gelfand Service Award for Educational Outreach, the Elliott Dunlap Smith Award for Teaching and Educational Service, and a Faculty Service Award from the Carnegie Mellon Alumni Association.

For more information about the series, see the Visiting Writers web page at https://www.kvcc.edu/campuslife/visitingwriters/ or contact Rob Haight at 269.488.4452 or rhaight@kvcc.edu.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
Mike Klok

Kalamazoo Valley alumni Mike Klok, (Graphic Design and General Studies, 2010) and owner of Stuffed Brain Studios, always knew that he wanted to be in advertising. Blending his knowledge and experience, he has taken it a step further while reaching out to his community.

Klok graduated from the WMU Haworth College of Business in 2012 where he studied marketing and advertising. Prior to that, his two and a half years at Kalamazoo Valley Community College were well spent taking art and new media classes and general studies.

"My time at KVCC helped further instill a desire to collaborate and impact my local community," said Klok. "From team projects in classrooms, to sharing weights in the gym, to the transfer of school credits to WMU, I was able to see the benefits of bringing like-minded people and causes together to reach a common goal."

Klok headed to the Detroit area to break into the advertising scene shortly after graduation. He soon learned that the unique Kalamazoo community not only embraced and supported new ideas and start-ups, it also offered a better cost of living. It was the perfect time and place to launch Stuffed Brain Studios, a design business and Kalamadoodle, a drink and draw event for all ages.

Kalamadoodle first appeared in Klok's notebook in 2013. By August 2014, Kalamadoodle held its first drink and draw event. Since then, it has continued to gain interest from local citizens and businesses. The monthly event has rotated through Kalamazoo breweries, and has held doodling events at the Kalamazoo Institute of Art two times. Kalamadoodle was invited to partner with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, Boatyard Brewing and Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 last spring, encouraging people to draw their vision of Kalamazoo.

"We've held over 30 events with the goal of connecting members of our community with each other, as well as with the creativity within them," said Klok. "As a volunteer-based project, we launched the Dare to Doodle Fund this past spring, with hopes of generating awareness and revenue to help sustain the cost and time invested in this community-building project."

The next event will be returning to Arcadia Brewing Company, on Wednesday, September 21, from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

"Kalamazoo's unique and passionate craft beer community has inspired the creativity of our participants," said Klok. "There's no doubt that it translates to the drawings we see on the tables."

STRENGTHS
WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 5?

At Kalamazoo Valley Community College, it's not unusual to hear the question, "What's your top 5?" That's because the college is a Strengths-based organization which means that students, staff and faculty are encouraged to explore and embrace their strengths. Gallup's StrengthsQuest was introduced at the college as a pilot program in 2007. Since that time, more than 14,000 students and staff members have taken the Strengths assessment to discover and develop their strengths. The StrengthsQuest program is based on several major psychological, social, and organizational development theories. Strengths result when talents are refined with knowledge and skill.

The Strengths tool provides participants with the opportunity to develop their Strengths by building on their greatest talents -- the way they most naturally think, feel, and behave as unique individuals. This assessment has helped students at more than 800 schools and universities to discover, develop, and apply their Top 5 Greatest Strengths Participants are provided with the tools to:

- Discover their greatest natural talents
- Improve their grades and increase their learning by making the most of their talents
- Determine a rewarding career path based on their unique talents
- Maximize potential by focusing on Strengths instead of weaknesses

Faculty and staff members complete the StrengthsQuest assessment as a part of the new employee orientation process. All students are also encouraged to complete the StrengthsQuest assessment and to explore their strengths in-depth through one-on-one counseling. Many Kalamazoo Valley instructors introduce students to strengths by weaving strengths lessons into their curriculum. Those who complete advanced strengths discussions can receive a Theme Sequence reports that detail 34 themes of talent, ranked in order of dominance.

Kalamazoo Valley student reading Strengths test results.

Strengths coach Beth Gregory-Wallis said strengths development can enhance many areas of life. "People who know their strengths can be intentional about applying them to achieve success in many areas of life and people who get a chance to use their strengths are happier," she said.

Strengths ambassador Andria Brown said once students become aware of their strengths, they come out automatically. "Some personality traits are really strengths," she said. "Even students who don't think they have any strengths can eventually see examples coming out."

Director of Student Services, Diane Vandenberg, believes knowledge of one's strengths is beneficial, no matter how much or little you use them. "Strengths is so positive. It doesn't put people in a box like other personality assessments," Vandenberg said.

Kalamazoo Valley graduate Christina Hayes learned to look at herself in a positive light after she took her Strengths assessment. She earned her GED as a 16-year-old and came to Kalamazoo Valley five years later. "I took my Strengths assessment and for the very first time I heard all of these positive things about myself," Hayes said. "I had never been in a situation like that before. I was so excited about it, I started bringing in my friends to take the test."

Her top 5 strengths of WOO (Winning Others Over), Communication, Empathy, Connectedness and Arranger enhanced her ability to serve as a waitress all those years ago and also explain her passion for helping others. After graduation from Kalamazoo Valley, Hayes went on to Western Michigan to earn a master's degree in Social Work degree. At WMU, she was awarded the Presidential Scholar Award for the School of Social Work. The Presidential Scholar award is WMU's highest academic honor for undergraduates.

Hayes now has a three-year-old daughter and is a case manager for Ark Services, where she works with youth who are homeless or in crisis. "I'm able to look at the world through that strengths lens," Hayes said. "I exercise all of my strengths every single moment at work. It's pretty amazing."

Hayes said she continues to share her strengths experience with everyone she encounters. "Because of my connectedness, I want to be able to continue to share this amazing gift with others," she said.

The Strengths assessment is just one of the tools students at Kalamazoo Valley use to help choose a program of study. This service is one of many offered free of charge to students through the Student Success Center.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
Keegen Henschel

Student Keegen Henschel, a Bay City High School graduate, took a few years off before starting college and deliberately changed his approach when he came to Kalamazoo Valley. "In high school, I was introverted and not doing anything extra," Henschel said. "I decided I wasn't going to do what I'd done in the past. I was going to dig deeper into the whole college experience."

The 25-year-old just completed his last class toward an associate degree in general studies. He's transferring to Western Michigan University this fall to study physics. Delving into the college experience meant thoroughly exploring his Strengths. "I was skeptical at first," Henschel said. "I didn't want to be psychoanalyzed and wondered how a questionnaire could tell me something I didn't already know about myself." He embraced Strengths with an open mind instead of falling back on cynicism. "That was the old me," he said. "I decided to go at this with a fresh view."

Henschel's top five Strengths are Analytical, Intellection, Input, Learner and Ideation. "Strengths isn't about telling you who you are," he said. "Its about helping you identify the natural talents that you've always had. Now I have a much better way to describe myself using the language I've learned through Strengths Development." He explained that everyone has 34 talents, but some are more prominent than others.

Henschel has used his talents by working as a peer student leader in the Student Success Center. "I help in any way I can," he said. He recently spoke to Summer Bridge students about Strengths exploration and at an orientation session for a group of science-focused Gobles High School students. Henschel believes everyone can benefit from Strengths exploration. "Any time I meet someone, I tell them about Strengths," he said.

SEE GIL GOLDE'S ART AT THE CENTER FOR NEW MEDIA

During the month of September, the Center for New Media is hosting a Gil Golde Retrospective exhibit including many works of art by the former Kalamazoo resident that have never been seen before.

"The show is phenomenal," said Tom Hamann, director of the Center for New Media. "It really depicts a lifelong study of art."

Golde's work spanned almost 85 years from the late 1920s until his death in 2015, at the age of 101. He studied art in the classical tradition at the National Academy of Design.

In the 1930s, as a student at The Arts Students League and the New School, Golde witnessed the emergence of modern art and studied with and worked alongside artists who shaped the modern art era such as Barnett Newman, Adolf Gottlieb, John Sloan, Ashille Gorky, Stuart Davis, and Mark Rothko. His greatest inspiration came from the expressionists – Franz Marc, Max Beckman, George Grosz, Egon Schille, and others working in Germany, Austria and Hungary. The social and political emphasis of their work, especially as they responded to the emergence of Nazism, resonated with him and sometimes infiltrated his work.

Golde was particularly drawn to the Swiss artist Paul Klee. Perhaps it was the quiet magic and the subtle social commentary that pleased him, or the tenderness and simplicity of message. Golde's work often contained the wry humor of Klee: a person climbing a ladder to nowhere, flowers in a vase that look like bones of hands, for example.

Though strongly influenced by social and political events, Golde would not explain or interpret his work. He often did not give titles to his paintings, wanting viewers instead to come to their own conclusions.

While Golde chose not to make his living selling his art, he was a disciplined artist– always carving out space and time for his work. Golde felt that the hundreds of pieces he had created left a legacy to be enjoyed by his family and the wider community.

Hamann is excited about sharing Golde's exceptional artwork with the public. "We're holding the show to honor Gil and his family," Hamann said. "I think it will be an inspiration for everyone, especially our illustration and animation students."

The Center for New Media is a regular stop on the monthly Art Hop schedule and often hosts exhibits of student, alumni and faculty artwork.

Gil Golde, Flight

VETERANS ARE WELCOMED
AT KALAMAZOO VALLEY

Mike Morehouse, Veteran Coordinator and Success Advocate at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

There are many resources available at Kalamazoo Valley Community College to help student veterans make the transition from military life back to the classroom. Kalamazoo Valley is indeed vet-friendly. The college just received gold-level status from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency for being a veteran-friendly academic institution.

The Michigan Veteran-Friendly School program recognizes academic institutions of higher learning committed to supporting the needs of student veterans and dependents. The program awards gold, silver and bronze-level status to institutions that offer veteran-centric services and programs.

Mike Morehouse, veteran coordinator and success advocate at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, is also launching a training program for Kalamazoo Valley faculty and staff members to help them understand how to help veterans in the classroom. The Texas Township Campus is outfitted with a new lounge for student veterans and a new Veterans Tribute Garden. Morehouse said his encounters with student veterans are customized to meet their needs. "Every day is a different day," he said. "Every person brings their own set of challenges and rewards. I love it because I love helping veterans."

Morehouse is a veteran who spent six years in the National Guard. He was deployed to Iraq in 2008 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with a security convoy that escorted trucks from Kuwait to all over Iraq. Morehouse graduated from Kalamazoo Valley with a liberal arts degree in psychology and criminal justice. Kalamazoo Valley wasn't his first attempt at college and he tries to help other vets learn from his mistakes. Fresh out of high school, he enrolled in Olivet College and joined the wrestling team. Debt was the main thing he took away from Olivet. Undaunted, he decided to give college another try after his military service ended.

"I wanted to go back to college, but I didn't want to go to a big university because I didn't want to deal with big class sizes," he said. "Kalamazoo Valley turned out to be a very good fit for me. It's a place to build a strong foundation."

Tom Sutton, Director of Wind Energy and Technical Services for Kalamazoo Valley, agrees that Kalamazoo Valley is a great fit for many veterans. The career academies, including the Wind Turbine Technician Academy, are structured and fast paced, two characteristics that appeal to many veterans.

"Veterans who choose the Wind Turbine Technician Academy do very well in the course. The cohort-based, hands-on accelerated training is what they have been used to in the military. Veterans are also sought after by employers in the wind industry because they tend to be very detail-oriented and able to follow process very well," Sutton said.

Joseph Palis, a Wind Turbine Technician Academy (WTTA) student who was a U.S. Army medic, said he was looking for a full-time, accelerated program that would lead to employment upon completion. "There are many similarities to the military," he said of the academy. "You need to be on your toes, it's physical, and there's a team mentality."

Army veteran Joshua Hillman, also a WTTA student, has a background in generator repair. He likes the fact that the Wind Turbine Technician Academy is hands-on, structured and professional. "I leave every day knowing that I am accomplishing a task, and that this is all part of something bigger," he said. Hillman was also impressed that VA and GI Bill benefits can be applied toward academy tuition.

Matthew LaBo, a WTTA student and Army veteran, said he's a hands-on learner who only wants to learn what's relevant to the wind industry. "Tom and the other instructors have a 'failure is not an option' attitude commonly seen in military institutions," LaBo said. "Also, risk management is a huge part of an infantryman's daily duties so I fit right in."

Paul Bianco, Director of Kalamazoo Valley's Law Enforcement Training Center, said police academy training appeals to many veterans. "As a 29+ year combat veteran of the Army, Army Reserve and National Guard, one of my highest priorities is my fellow American veterans who have it in their bloodstream to continue their service locally by becoming police officers," Bianco said. "Each man or woman who has served our country is given every opportunity to succeed and earn their MCOLES (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards) certification. The military grows strong citizens. At the Kalamazoo Valley Community College police and corrections academies, we continue to build on a veterans' disciplined foundation. It is a natural progression into a great civilian profession."

Since he started in his role as Veteran Coordinator, Morehouse has assisted 106 student veterans. "I help them from the application process to educational benefits through the Veterans Administration," Morehouse said. "I do what I can to help them get ready for college and make sure we're setting the standard for vet friendliness."

Kalamazoo Valley is one of six Michigan colleges with a Veterans Outreach Coordinator for VetSuccess on Campus. The VetSuccess on Campus program provides help accessing, understanding and applying for VA benefits; assistance in applying for healthcare benefits (medical, mental health referrals and readjustment counseling services) for eligible veterans and their families; vocational exploration and assistance in selecting a suitable career/major; job placement assistance and coordination with Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Training Service; coordination with school faculty/staff to provide veteran services; and assistance in locating community and other resources.

Morehouse said he and his colleagues work hard to ensure that Kalamazoo Valley's student veterans are receiving the support they need to succeed. "I help them mostly with educational benefits, but I can also help vets access other resources," Morehouse said. He will contact a veteran's previous college, and will help connect veterans with resources like free legal advice and financial assistance.

"There are a lot of little things we're doing to build something good for veterans," Morehouse said. "It's very humbling – it's a great feeling."

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